

WILLIAM EARL JOHNS

(Bengeo, 1893 - London, 1968)

Close work (48 Sqdn) Bristol fighters and Fokker 'Tripes'
signed lower right with R. 9f (?) and inscribed with title

watercolour and bodycolour

270 x 385 mm

Provenance:
Phillips Ipswich, September 25, 1997, Pictures & Works of Art including the Baird Collection, lot 479

Dating from 1916, this drawing of a World War I dogfight by W.E. Johns, author of the Biggles Novels, is among the earliest depictions of flying and aerial combat.

Commissioned into the royal flying corps, in 1918 Johns was shot down over the Western Front.

In 1932 he launched the magazine Popular Flying, in which his Biggles

stories, eventually to number close to a hundred, first appeared.